



JOHNSONIAN NEWS LETTER

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PRIOR'S LITERARY WORKS

The recently-published two-volume edition of The Literary Works of Matthew Prior (Clarendon) reached us last week. We believe that those of you who have examined it will agree that we owe the warmest thanks to the Clarendon Press of Oxford for this latest addition to the series of complete, accurate, and annotated texts of works and letters which for many years it has been producing for eighteenth-century scholars and enthusiasts. But in any successful venture of this kind—again we think you will agree—the major vote of thanks should go to the editors, in this case H. Bunker Wright (Miami Univ.) and Monroe K. Spears (Univ. of the South), for no matter how lavish the support of a press, the final product is praiseworthy only if the editors bring to their work imagination, intelligence, patience, and scrupulosity. Wright and Spears have brought these qualities in abundance.

As the title indicates, this new edition includes all of Prior's literary works—prose and verse in English and Latin; the term "literary" is not taken to embrace his memorials and other state papers, his journals, diaries, and correspondence. As the result of a careful collation of all the extant manuscripts and early publications, the editors have made a number of important changes in the canon, changes that will in all likelihood soon be accepted as definitive. Forty-one works are here published for the first time: three prose essays (To Isaac Bickerstaff, Observations on Homer, and Observations on Ovid's Metamorphoses), two fragmentary plays (Ladislaus and Britanicus), five epigrams, and thirty-one Latin works. Fourteen published works never before included in an edition of Prior are also printed. Sixty titles have been listed as Works Wrongly Attributed, and eighteen others as Works of Doubtful Authenticity.

The works are arranged in chronological order according to dates of composition. (The Latin works appear separately in Volume II.) The textual apparatus is complete, and the Commentary includes for each work a list of the manuscripts in which the work occurs, an account of the publications of the work, a statement of the copy-text and of the texts collated, evidence for the date, and a description of the occasion, if known. Notes to specific passages have been kept to a minimum, for the editors apparently have assumed their audience to be one familiar with classical mythology, conversant with Latin, and in no need of explanations except for particularly obscure allusions or obsolete words.

The problem of deciding upon an audience for a work of this kind is always a difficult one. Should the editors think only of other scholars, or should they aim for a wider group? Should the text be designed mainly for reference, or should it be a reading text? Obvious enough questions, but especially difficult to answer when one recognizes the need for an authoritative, annotated text and at the same time wishes not to bury the appealing literary qualities of his material. The present editors have effected an entirely satisfactory compromise. As we have suggested, they have assumed an informed, intelligent audience; hence their Commentary includes only essentials, and it is relegated to the end of the second volume. Although this makes for some inconvenience when one is reading in Volume I, it allows the text to be printed without the intrusion of notes. It is not an arrangement suitable for the works of all authors, but for Prior, much of whose verse still speaks directly without the need of an intermediary, it is the best of a number of possibilities. Here is a text designed for the scholarly reader! Congratulations to all concerned, for a very welcome addition to our eighteenth-century shelves.

JOHNSON NOTES

If the mail we received during the last few weeks before going to press can be taken as an accurate index, Johnsonians were especially active in January and February arranging special events to mark this important anniversary year, the 250th of the birth and the 200th of Rasselas. Among the most exciting of the events will be the publication of a book of essays entitled New Light on Dr. Johnson: Essays on the Occasion of his 250th Birthday by

Members of The Johnsonians (Yale U.P.). Originally discussed at the annual dinner held by The Johnsonians in New York last September, the book will be edited by Ted Hilles, who deserves the fullest credit for its plan and for ensuring that its publication will coincide with Johnson's birthday.

Hilles has obligingly provided us with the Table of Contents, which we pass along to you to whet your appetites: W. S. Lewis, "The Young Waterman"; D. Nichol Smith, "Johnson's Poems"; John Butt, "Johnson and the Grandeur of Generality"; Mary Lascelles, "Johnson and Juvenal"; Robert F. Metzdorf, "Johnson at Drury Lane"; William K. Wimsatt, Jr., "Johnson's Dictionary"; Gwin J. Kolb, "Johnson's 'Dissertation on Flying'"; Maurice J. Quinlan, "Dr. Franklin Meets Dr. Johnson"; James L. Clifford, "A Biographer Looks at Dr. Johnson"; Donald and Mary Hyde, "Dr. Johnson's Second Wife"; Frederick A. Pottle, "The Dark Hints of Sir John Hawkins and Boswell"; E.L. McAdam, Jr., "Dr. Johnson as Bibliographer and Book Collector"; M.H. Abrams, "Dr. Johnson's Spectacles"; Bertrand H. Bronson, "Personification Reconsidered"; Herman W. Liebert, "We Fell upon Sir Eldred"; William R. Keast, "Johnson and Intellectual History"; Frederick W. Hilles, "The Making of The Life of Pope"; Sir S. C. Roberts, "Johnson in Parody"; James M. Osborn, "Dr. Johnson and the Contrary Converts"; Joyce Hemlow, "Dr. Johnson and the Young Burneys." As the titles suggest, there will be something here for everyone, no matter what his interest in Johnson. In Hilles's own words, "it is a varied list--some short, some long--some biographical, some critical--some serious, some gay." We feel safe in predicting that the book will earn your enthusiastic approval.

From Frederick B. Adams, Jr., Director of the Morgan Library, we have learned that this year the annual dinner of The Johnsonians will be held at the Library on Friday, September 18, and that from Tuesday, September 22, to Saturday, November 28, the Library will be open to the public for a Johnson exhibition, tentatively entitled "Dr. Johnson and His Circle." During the course of the exhibition talks will be given on three great literary figures

of the eighteenth century--Dr. Johnson, Voltaire, and Franklin.

And from Lyle H. Kendall, Jr. (Texas Christian) we have received word of a spring exhibition of many Johnson and Boswell first editions and manuscripts from the William Luther Lewis Collection, which is especially strong in eighteenth-century materials. We wish we had space to give you the complete list of the exhibit. Kendall is compiling a descriptive catalog of the collection, however, and will be most happy to answer queries about it and the exhibit. If any of you know of other celebration plans, please be sure to let us know so that we can help to give them the publicity they deserve.

The 1958 Transactions of the Lichfield Johnson Society contains Addresses No. 43, "Hospital of Saint John Baptist without the Barrs of the City of Lichfield," some notes on its history by Harry Baylis; and No. 44, Jim Clifford's Presidential Address, "Johnson's Works in our Day." At the risk of offending his sense of modesty we quote Clifford's last paragraph, for it makes a point that can never be too often repeated: "The time has come when we ought to cease being apologetic about the works of Samuel Johnson, while we go on stressing the goodness of the man himself. Of course, he was a good man, a fascinating man. But he was also a major writer, one of the great figures of English literature. Although what I am about to say may shock some of you, I am sure it is true. It is in his writings, rather than in the witty, explosive remarks so marvellously set down by Boswell, that Johnson has most to say to our generation."

In our October issue we listed the program of the Johnson Society of London. We have heard that two recent addresses were outstanding. On January 17 John Butt spoke on the Juvenalian imitations of Pope and Johnson. His reading of some of Johnson's majestic lines was very moving. Then on February 14 Rea Keast of Cornell spoke on the problems facing an editor of Johnson's Lives of the Poets. It was a brilliant paper, showing a complete grasp of the difficulties involved.

On March 10 Sir Sydney Roberts is to read a paper to the Johnson Club on "Estimate" Brown.

Some of you may have seen the title The Mountains of Rasselas (Weidenfeld & Nicolson), by Thomas Pakenham,

and wondered if perhaps you have missed a new work on Johnson. We can assure you that you have not--the book is an account of the author's travels through Ethiopia. Presumably both the author and the publisher thought that the name "Rasselas" is well enough known to attract potential readers--an encouraging sign.

The January number of the New Rambler, the Journal of the Johnson Society of London, contains the following pieces: Sir Sydney Roberts, "The Author of the Rambler"; James L. Clifford, "Johnson and the Americans" and "Commemorative Address"; G. P. Gooch, "Anglo-French Contacts in the Age of Johnson, Part II"; H. A. Morgan, "The Re-consecration of St. Clement Danes Church."

Other articles to be mentioned are H.A. Morgan, "Johnson's 'Life of Savage,'" Contemporary Review for January; Oscar Sherwin, "A Man with a Tail--Lord Monboddo," Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences, 1958 (Vol. XIII, No. 4)--contains much on Boswell and Johnson; Richard North, "The Religion of Dr. Johnson," Hibbert Journal, October 1957--we overlooked this when it appeared; D. J. Greene, "Some Notes on Johnson and the Gentleman's Magazine," PMLA for Mar.; Helen T. Greany, "Johnson and the Institutes," N&Q for October.

THE PQ BIBLIOGRAPHY

In our last number we had time and space for only the briefest mention of the July issue of Philological Quarterly, which contains the annual bibliography of modern studies of eighteenth-century literature. Now that we have had an opportunity to examine it more carefully, we wish again to bring it to your attention. As in the past, the bibliography lists all the significant books, articles, and reviews that appeared during the preceding year for the period 1660-1800. The usual convenient division of material is followed; the balance is excellent; and the critiques are notably provocative. In short, this latest addition to the PQ bibliography has kept up the high standards that we have come to expect of it and that have made it indispensable for all eighteenth-century scholars. Curt A. Zimansky (Iowa) deserves our warmest appreciation for a job very well done!

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS ITEMS

From Benjamin Boyce (Duke) we received an account of the recent activities of the Duke University Graduate English Club. On March 6-7 the Club presented an ambitious eighteenth-century program to commemorate the tercentenary of Henry Purcell's birth and to welcome the Duke English Department's Conference on Eighteenth Century Literature. The program opened on the afternoon of the 6th with three papers--"Pope's Character Sketches: A Conflict in Augustan Theory," by Benjamin Boyce; "William Cowper: The Continuing Revaluation," by Lodwick Hartley (N.C. State); "The 'Dress of Thought' in the Poetry of Pope," by Aubrey Williams (Florida)-- and was followed that evening by a concert of Purcell's music for Dryden's King Arthur. On the 7th the meeting heard three more papers--"Handel in the Theatre: Notes on the Baroque Opera," by George E. Dorris (Duke); "Messrs. Bickerstaff and Spectator," by Richmond P. Bond (N.C.); "Eighteenth-Century Sentimentalism in Theory and Practice," by Alan D. McKillop (Rice). On the evening of March 8 the choir of St. Philip's Church (Durham) presented a concert of Purcell's anthems and instrumental music. We envy those in the North Carolina area who were fortunate enough to attend the meetings, the success of which, incidentally, was largely due to the able management of Michael F. Shugrue, president of the club.

In our December issue we announced that plans were being made in London for the celebration of the centenaries of Handel and Purcell. Jim Clifford, who has been indefatigable in keeping us supplied with news items from abroad, has sent us a detailed account of the three-week festival, which is being organized by the Arts Council, the British Council, the BBC, the British Museum, and the L.C.C., to be held from June 8 through 27. Among Handel's works to be given are Samson, Rodelinda, Semele, and Solomon. The Old Vic Company has been invited to give several performances of The Tempest in the adaptation by Dryden and Davenant, with the whole of Purcell's incidental music. The plans include, among other events, a full stage presentation of Purcell's Dido and Aeneas and concert versions of The Faery Queen and King Arthur.

The N. Y. C. Department of Commerce and Public Events will sponsor a "Handel Festival" from March 1 through May 20, but we have seen no details of the performances to be given.

One more musical item: On February 11, at the Royal Festival Hall recital room in London, were held two concerts for men only. Considered to be unsuitable for mixed audiences, the two "gentlemen's concerts" were described as "an entertainment of ribald and amorous songs and verse of the 17th and 18th centuries." One woman took part, a singer referred to as "Madame X," who wore a black mask. A N.Y. newspaper account seen by one of our readers reports that the concert took place without mishap and--presumably--to the enjoyment of all.

Ernest C. Mossner (Texas) has forwarded to us a handsomely printed brochure--"A Splore in honor of the two-hundredth Anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns." The festivities described were held on February 25. Presided over by Mossner, they included the acceptance by the University of Texas of a recently-donated portrait of Burns; an address--"The Living Burns," by A.D. McKillop (Rice); the reading of an original verse of tribute, "The Provost Taks Tae Parritch," by Ian Ross, Dundee; and the singing of a number of Burns songs to the accompaniment of pipes. All this by way of opening an exhibition of Burns MSS, editions and related material.

We are indebted to Vivian H.S. Mercier (C.C.N.Y.) for bringing to our attention the recently established University of Dublin Fund, which has as its goal the raising of £500,000 to build and endow a major extension of the Library of Trinity College. As one of the four Copyright Libraries in the islands, Trinity each year acquires 35,000 books, pamphlets, and periodicals, and is fighting a losing battle against congestion. So far the appeal has brought in £110,000, but the directors of the University, with an eye to the future, have wisely and hopefully rejected a piecemeal solution. Many American scholars have already contributed generously to the fund; Mercier feels, and we think rightfully, that they will be joined by JNL's readers, who, as he reminds us, "have a special regard for the first institution to confer a doctor's degree on Dr. Johnson." Gifts should be sent to T. M. Dowling, 61 Broadway, N.Y. 6, and made payable to the University of Dublin Fund.

Texas Studies in English (an annual) has completed plans to become a quarterly, with the new title Texas Studies in Literature and Language. A Journal of the Humanities. The advisory board of the new publication will consist of Hazard Adams, Thomas Cranfill,

Frederick Eckman, Frederick Ginascot, Richard Hoppin, Winfred Lehmann, Ernest Mossner, William Todd. Subscriptions would be sent to the Business Manager, Texas Studies in Literature and Language, University of Texas Press, Austin 12; manuscripts to the Editor, Texas Studies in Lit. and Lang., University Station, Austin 12. Fifty free offprints will be given to each contributor. We wish all success to this new venture.

The library of The Players (16 Gramercy Pk, N.Y.C.), the club founded in 1888 by Edwin Booth, has just been opened to the public. The bulk of the library is the private collection of Booth, which includes many volumes of theatrical history, first editions of the works of Ben Jonson, and--of interest to eighteenth-century scholars--some MS. letters from Garrick and Goldsmith. We quote (without comment) the N.Y. Times report, dated Sat., March "One letter from Oliver Goldsmith, dated Dec. 2, 1769, is addressed to a Mr. Johnson and asks: 'Can you loan me a few pounds?'"

As you know, JNL's policy is to accept no advertising. However, we reserve the right to break precedent in exceptional cases. We quote part of an entry from Barnes & Noble Catalog No. 396, p. 6, Item 54: "Index to the Private Papers of James Boswell. Compiled by Ralph Malahide Castle."

At the recent dedication of the Charles Blanchard Seminar Room at Wheaton College, William S. Akin, an enthusiastic collector of the various editions of Johnson's Dictionary, placed on display part of his holdings. He hopes soon to find a fifth edition, to complete his collection.

Louis E. Goodyear's new address is Aramco, Box 1645, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. He writes that he was able to get to England last fall for a visit with Jim Clifford in London and a short stay in Lichfield, unfortunately not during the September celebrations.

We note with regret the recent death of Sir John Squire, president in 1935 of the Lichfield Johnson Society and a life-long Johnson enthusiast.

We hear that George Sherburn is spending the second semester in Urbana at the University of Illinois.

Congratulations are in order for two scholars well known to all JNL readers: Bertrand H. Bronson (Calif.) and René Wellek (Yale), recipients of ACLS awards for outstanding past achievements. The announcement was made at the 40th annual meeting of the ACLS held in Rochester on January 22-23. The ACLS Newsletter for January also notes the granting of a fellowship to Richard D. Altick (Ohio State) for a projected study of the history and techniques of English and American literary biography. Altick has an interesting article on this subject in the January 24 issue of the Nation.

We extend our sincere apologies to Miss Rae Blanchard (Professor Emeritus, Goucher) for referring to her as "him" in our announcement (Dec. 1958) that Goucher had awarded her a Litt. D. for her outstanding work as teacher and scholar. We hope Miss Blanchard will agree with us that the unfortunate slip had at least one good result: the number of letters we received telling us about it proves beyond a doubt that her friends are many and loyal. As for us, it's pleasant to be re-assured that our readers do not just toss JNL aside "to be read later."

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF EDMUND BURKE

As long ago as May 1953 we reported with delight that the complete Burke Correspondence had begun to get under way, made possible by the generous contributions of the Carnegie Corporation and the University of Chicago Press. Since then Tom Copeland (Univ. of Mass.), as general editor, aided by impressive Editorial and Advisory committees of American, British, and Irish scholars, has labored diligently and well. Volume One (April 1744--June 1768) of The Correspondence of Edmund Burke (Chicago, 1958), edited by general editor Copeland, has now appeared, a fine beginning for this projected ten-volume series. Volume Two should appear shortly; Volume Three will probably come out by the fall of next year; and thereafter plans call for a volume a year. In all, there survive about 1700 of Burke's letters and almost twice that number of letters to him. Needless to add, many of these have never before appeared in print.

The format of this first volume is admirable. Annotation is complete, succinct, located conveniently at the foot of the page. The practice governing transcription preserves the flavor and appearance of the originals without slavishly imitating them. Like those to

follow, this volume is supplied with a temporary index of persons mentioned in the text and notes; until the appearance of the final index volume, these individual indexes will be of great value.

Volume One follows Burke's career from his early student days in Dublin at the age of sixteen to his fortieth year. Of the 197 letters here published (most of them from Burke himself), the majority date from the period between Burke's 16th and 19th, and his 37th and 40th years. In his early, undergraduate letters, as Copeland points out, Burke gives few obvious or dramatic signs of the genius he was to become. What do emerge clearly, however, are his wide-ranging interests and his ambition to become a writer. The second principal group of letters introduces us to Burke at the threshold of his magnificent Parliamentary career. Not the least source of interest in these early letters is that they help us to understand why Burke abandoned literature for politics. As later volumes appear, we look forward to discovering more and more about the Johnson circle.

DR. JOHNSON'S "JUDICIOUS REMARKS"

In our December issue we included (p. 12) Arthur Sherbo's list of Johnson's observations on pastoral poetry for which Joseph Warton expressed gratitude in the Advertisement to his edition of Virgil (1753). Lack of space prevented our printing Sherbo's entire comment, the remainder of which we here present in the form of a second installment:

"Warton's reference to Johnson's 'judicious remarks' puts me in mind of the Preface to the Reverend Francis Fawkes' translation of the Idylliums of Theocritus, in which Johnson is given credit for having 'corrected part of this work' and for 'some judicious remarks' which he furnished. Professors Hazen and Mabbott, taking this to mean that Johnson contributed some original notes, examined the notes to the translation with Johnson's possible remarks in mind. They found four notes 'undoubtedly' by Johnson and suggested six others for closer examination (RES, 1945, 142-46). I strongly suspect that Johnson's 'judicious remarks' here, as in Warton's Virgil, were only those marked clearly as his, i.e., from works he had already published. As Hazen and Mabbott point out, there is one quotation from Rambler 37, one from London, and two from the Dictionary in the notes to the translation. What Johnson's corrections may be is another matter."

SOME NEW BOOKS

For many years Richmond P. Bond (Univ. of N.C.) has been recognized as a leading authority on the periodical literature of the eighteenth century. His latest contribution is New Letters to the Tatler and Spectator (Univ. of Texas), which prints for the first time ninety-six letters sent to but never published in the Tatler and the Spectator, and now preserved in the Marlborough and Tickell collections. Bond has carefully edited his material and has provided useful notes and an introduction. Few of the letters have any lasting literary value, but almost all of them should be of interest to students of eighteenth-century language, customs, and popular thought. The immediate impression one receives from these letters is their diversity of subject matter and of style; a later, more lasting impression is of their broadly similar attitudes. The book is a nice illustration, in brief compass, of the unity and the diversity of the eighteenth century.

By the time you receive this JNL, Scribner's will have published a new edition of Geoffrey Scott's classic The Portrait of Zélide, with a brief, appreciative Introduction by George Dangerfield (winner of the Pulitzer Prize for The Era of Good Feeling). There is little we can say about this work that is not already known. Since 1925, when it was first published, it has become familiar to Johnsonians and Boswellians the world over, not only for its comment on Boswell's relationship with his Dutch inamorata, but also for the brilliance of its biographical technique. Scribner's is to be commended for once again making the book available

Although we have not seen a copy of The Scottish Tradition in Literature, by Kurt Wittig, we are obliged to William Gillis (State Coll., Moorehead, Minn.) for telling us about it. Apparently Wittig, in his section on the eighteenth century, elaborates a point similar to that made by David Daiches in his study of Burns. Writes Gillis, who found the book both readable and thorough: "Wittig puts forth the idea that Scottish vernacular poetry cannot be related to the English literary tradition. It is part of a more metropolitan European tradition. This idea clarifies the inability of 18th century Scots to write in the neo-Classical tradition and their departure into what is erroneously called Romanticism."

Volume XII of Studies in Bibliography (1959), edited by Fredson Bowers and published by the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia, contains a number of articles of interest: "Publishers and Sinners: The Augustan View," by Ian Watt; "Scottish Printers and Booksellers 1668-1775: A Supplement," by R. H. Carnie and R. P. Doig; "Blake's Engravings and his Friendship with Flaxman," by G. E. Bentley, Jr.; "Recurrent Printing," by William B. Todd; "'Oh! Sophonisba! Sophonisba! Oh!'" by D. F. Foxon; "Supplementary Notes on Samuel Richardson as a Printer," by Alan D. McKillop; "A Selective Check List of Bibliographical Scholarship for 1957," by Rudolf Hirsch and Howell J. Heany.

We wish to draw your attention to Studies in the English Renaissance Drama (N.Y.U.), ed. Josephine W. Bennett Oscar Cargill, Vernon Hall, Jr. The volume is dedicated to Karl J. Holzknecht, long known for his works on Renaissance drama, and contains twenty-one essays by leading scholars on the Elizabethan stage. Though not of direct interest to the majority of JNL readers, for those who range afield we highly recommend the collection.

Other new books to be mentioned: The Banks Letters, ed. W. R. Dawson (Trustees of the British Museum); J. I. Felps, Pope's Common Sense (Meador); R. S. Fitton and A. P. Wadsworth, The Strutts and the Arkwrights, 1758-1830 (Manchester U.P.); Tom Girtin, Doctor with Two Aunts. A Biography of Peter Pindar (Hutchinson); Sir C. P. Petrie, The Jacobite Movement (Eyre & S.); E. Vipont, Henry Purcell and His Times (Lutt.P.); Lewis M. Wiggin, The Faction of Cousins: a Political Account of the Grenvilles, 1733-1763 (Yale U.P.).

Two new pamphlets in the Writers and Their Work Series (British Council) have appeared: No. 101, Samuel Richardson by R. F. Brissenden; No. 107, Oliver Goldsmith, by A. Norman Jeffares.

In the world of paperbacks there are a number of interesting items: Joseph Andrews, introd. Mary Ellen Chase (Norton); The Man of Feeling, introd. Kenneth C. Slagle (Norton); Jonathan Swift, Selected Prose and Poetry, ed. Edward Rosenheim, Jr. (Rinehart).

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We had no room this time for our usual list of recent articles. It will be included in our next issue.